

DEVELOPING VISUAL AWARENESS AND
CREATIVITY THROUGH ART EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

Two of the long range goals of art education are to develop in the students a greater awareness of themselves and their environment and a creative outlook or way of living. Much has been written on this subject already, but I want to use this paper to further develop my own thinking and my own program with these goals in mind. In writing the paper, I will bring to my own mind what experiments in art education work in my situation and what doesn't work or is not adaptable to my situation.

I became interested in writing on this topic while taking graduate level educational psychology courses. One instructor, E. Paul Torrance stressed both creativity and awareness in education. I realized at that time there was more to these areas than I had previously explored.

In the paper, I will lay out some of typical art activities with emphasis on creativity and awareness. Throughout the paper integration of creativity and awareness will be stressed.

This paper is not meant to be a curriculum for any art classes, but a culmination of ideas on art education with creativity and awareness emphasized.

CHAPTER I

IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL AWARENESS AND CREATIVITY

Why is it so important to develop awareness and creativity in our students? This question can be answered only after you have an understanding of what awareness and creativity are. I will begin by describing awareness and then creativity. After both have been described I will show how they relate to each other and how they are a vital part of our lives. Their importance will then become obvious.

Awareness can be broken down into two types, visual awareness and aesthetic awareness. Visual awareness is the ability to see. That is, not just to see things for protection or for recognition, but to be able to look critically at our environment and become aware of what is around us. When most people look at an object they can tell what it is, but when asked to describe it they find that they cannot do so. This is because they have not looked at the object critically. They have not examined its shape, color, texture and relationship with the other objects around it. These people see for

protection, that is, they see objects as obstacles to avoid. They also see for recognition. When looking at a tree they will record the fact that it is a tree and that might be all. Questions such as, what kind of tree is it, what colors do I see in the tree, how thick is the trunk, is it an old tree or a young tree, is it lighter or darker in value than its surroundings, what different textures do I see in it and many more are never conscientiously or subconscientiously asked or answered. These are questions that could be considered about every object in one's surroundings. At this point I should make clear that I don't believe that all people should ask all possible questions about every object, because this is obviously impossible. Also, I do not mean that everything people see is only for recognition or protection. Everyone sees some things that are enjoyable to him. The point I wish to make is that most people do not use this sense of seeing to their fullest. As children we examine everything with all our senses because everything is new to us then, but as we have seen objects time and again we no longer examine them but only see and record what they are. There are many things in our environment that can be appreciated and enjoyed more

fully if one can renew this childlike curiosity. The old saying "curiosity killed the cat" is not a good rule to live by because nothing would be discovered if people didn't explore what is not known to them.

Visual awareness also takes in the senses of touch, smell, and taste. For if when we see certain objects we can very quickly recall its physical makeup. An example is, after having run your finger over a rough textured object such as sandpaper one can immediately create this feeling when looking at this rough texture. The same holds true if one has tasted a lemon. The color yellow may even stimulate a sour taste in the mouth. The smoothness of silk can be felt when seen. All these things can be classified as being part of visual awareness.

Aesthetic awareness is more difficult to define. It is a feeling one has about the relationships of tastes, smells and a feeling of fine order. These are only some qualities of the term aesthetic. I will not try to further define the word because its meaning cannot be fully described with words. What then is aesthetic awareness? It is an awareness of the order of things in our environment and a sense of their being "right and valid" in terms of their

organization, material makeup, and purpose. How can something such as this be developed? First a sense of organization must be developed. This can be done through teaching organization in art and through the use of visual aids that emphasize valid use of material and good design with consideration of purpose.

Why is it important to be aware of one's own environment? In this age of jet airplanes, space travel, television, and other conveniences, many people are becoming less and less aware of themselves and their surroundings than any time in the past. They need to get back to earth and become aware of themselves and their environment. But there is a reason other than knowing ones self for teaching awareness. We have so many decisions to make in choosing home designs, furniture styles, and other personal things that it helps if one knows something about applied design. Being aesthetically aware helps us sift through the magnitude of advertising and salesmanship thrust upon us in these areas. It helps us enjoy life in a fuller and richer way. There is even more to being an "aware" person than for just personal satisfaction. Visual awareness is necessary in order to have a society that is aware of community problems. Decisions have to be made about new

buildings for the community, statues for parks, planning of streets, apartments, zoning, and other community projects. An aesthetically aware person again can make the best choices.

These are the reasons why awareness must be developed in our public schools. After all the goal of American education is to produce good citizens.

Creativity is also very important to being a good citizen. It is a fact that every advancement made was the product of a creative idea. Let's look at what creativity is. In the book Creative and Mental Growth by Viktor Lowenfeld and W. Lambert Brittain, creativity is broken into the following parts:

- (1) Sensitivity ----- a sensitivity to problems, to attitudes and feelings of other people, and to the experiences of living. This is the ability to use eyes not only for seeing but for observing, ears not only for hearing but for listening, and hands not only for touching but for feeling. This high degree of awareness of a material, a situation, or anything unusual or promising. Certainly this is a central experience in working with art materials, where being sensitive to a line or form can be encouraged and developed at all levels.
- (2) Fluency ----- This is the ability to produce a large number of ideas in a short period of time, to be able to think rapidly and freely.
- (3) Flexibility ----- The ability to adjust quickly to new situations or to change rapidly in one's thinking.
- (4) Originality ----- This is the ability to think

- of new or novel responses and is the opposite of the usual or accepted.
- (5) Redefine or reorganize ----- To be able to rearrange ideas and shift the uses and functions of objects, or to see them in a new light, is apparently a quality that utilizes what is known, but for new or different purposes.
 - (6) Ability to abstract ----- The skill of analyzing the various parts of a problem or seeing specific relationships.
 - (7) Ability to synthesize ----- The ability to combine several elements into a new form or whole.
 - (8) Ability to organize ----- That is, the ability to put parts together in a meaningful way.¹

Creativity and awareness relate to each other in that a creative person is an aware person. Without an awareness to your surroundings and a feeling for one's environment, it will be impossible to be truly creative. The person with a low sense of awareness is not going to be concerned with the idea of changing things, he is content with things as they are. Therefore he will not produce the creative ideas necessary for progress and improvement.

Creative imagination is one of the most valuable possessions a man has. This holds true regardless of his profession. Changes and new ideas are an important part of every profession. Only the creative individual is capable of producing these changes. Obviously, this

¹Viktor Lowenfeld, Creative and Mental Growth (third edition; New York; The Macmillan Company, 1957), pp. 7-9.

individual progresses to the top of his field faster than one who never had ideas to better the product, working conditions, efficiency, or make other beneficial changes. This creative person is also a person trying to better his community which is beneficial to us all. Thomas Edison, Benjamin Franklin, and Alexander Graham Bell were all creative men. They would not have made their discoveries if it were not for their creativity. So creativity is not something that is only for people in the arts. However, art is the natural subject for the development of creativity. Art must be creative. Students trying to paint, sculpt, or work on any art project should be trying to be as original in their ideas as possible. This has not always been the way art has been taught though. Some teachers are not even teaching art with these goals in mind today, when creativity is being recognized as an important part of education. In discussions with art teachers of various backgrounds, I have found that some teach art for appreciation; that is, they have a course which is emphasizing art history, others have a course which seems to be set up for the training of young artists. In my art education courses and many articles I have read on art education, it has been stressed that we are not training the students to be artists. For

very few of our students will ever become professional artists, but we must develop a more creative and aware individual. This is something that art education is in the best position to do. Why is art the area that can best handle this role? Because of the very things that distinguish an artist from people in other professions. Artists must be creative people. Creativity is something that is essential to art. What about awareness? How is that connected with art? An artist is always an "aware" person. He is sensitive to his environment and is aware of the details within it. This is why he can "draw" better than others. He can draw well because he looks critically at everything while those that cannot draw, only see in generalizations. An artist is a person who has a sensitivity to design. This also helps him look at his own environment with more enjoyment than do people who are not sensitive to design. These are the reasons why art is able to develop awareness and creativity. While teaching the children to do art work the students will find a new way of looking at themselves and a new way of thinking. Some students will sometimes spend more time thinking about and planning their art projects than they will on many, if any, of their other classes. I believe this is because in art their own

ideas are accepted and rewarded. This creates a self motivation that other areas of education only talk about achieving.

CHAPTER II

DRAWING AND DESIGN

Drawing is one of the basic activities in any art program. I personally feel that, with more money available for art materials in our schools, drawing is being neglected for more glamorous and expensive activities. This is not good because drawing is one of the best activities for developing awareness in the students and is a necessary skill for many other art activities. I have found that students enjoy art work more and put more effort into their work when they develop more craftsmanship in their work and understand techniques involved in the activities. This being true, they are going to be better equipped to use creative thinking when they are not worried about processes and know of more possible ways to use materials. However, I am not for teaching drawing with skill and ability to draw realistically as the major goals. The drawing unit must emphasize looking critically. Then visual awareness will become important to the student.

Along with drawing, design should be taught. Design

is also one of the most important parts of any art program. Design is the structure of art. It is the organization of creative ideas and self expression. Through design both aesthetic awareness and creativity can be developed. Because of the importance of design and the fact that creativity and aesthetic awareness can be developed through this unit, it should not be covered and dropped in a short period of time. Design should be stressed throughout the entire art program. There are many good books out on this subject. I use material from several of these books, but I don't follow one book exclusively. There is not just one set of problems or projects to use to teach design so the teacher should vary the activities according to the needs of his class. I may give different problems to two different art classes depending on the needs of the students in the classes. I even give different problems to two students in the same class. One thing that is important in teaching design is to let the students explore the elements of design and be creative. Every project, should be a creative project. We should teach creative design and this will develop creativity in the student and exploration of design will help develop aesthetic awareness. The following outline will describe how I break up the elements of

design and present them. These elements should be presented as guides to increase aesthetic awareness and not as rules to be followed rigidly.

Visual Awareness - Looking Critically

At the beginning of this unit I emphasize looking critically. One of my first activities will be an exercise that requires no drawing at all, but examining an object and making a list of the observations made. Each student should be given a small object of varied color and texture. This could be a small stone, a piece of wood, a small sponge or any other object. Tell the students to examine carefully and make a list of their observations of the object. A time limit should be set for this activity. I find that at least 15 minutes is necessary to get the students past the very obvious observations and make them find new things about the object. The students usually enjoy this activity, but find they must work extremely hard. After the first obvious observations have been made, it takes effort to make further observations. This helps the student to realize what looking critically means. Introducing a different activity such

as this also sets up a more creative atmosphere in the class which in turn will be beneficial to bringing out their creative ideas. The students should find the art class a new and exciting experience if it is to be of value.

Form in Nature

I begin this unit by showing slides of objects in their natural environment emphasizing how they create patterns and interesting designs. I also have them explore the skeletal structure of objects in nature and see how they have been used to stimulate creative ideas for many artists. I usually try to take the students on a field trip to find objects in nature to draw. Fortunately, I teach in a rural school and we have large fields adjacent to the school. This presents a unique opportunity for me to take the students outdoors to draw and collect different materials. They bring in everything from twigs, grain, weeds of various kinds, butterflies, thistles, to manmade objects such as; parts of metal objects that are rusted, etc. These objects can be drawn in many different ways. They are drawn in contour, imaginary

x-rays views and are distorted. This helps give the student an awareness of his environment. If they can't get out, I have them bring objects from home. They bring in fruit and vegetables, such as; apples, oranges, gourds, pepper, etc. I let them do a contour drawing of the outside appearance of these objects. After they have completed this, they can do an imaginary drawing of the object cut in half. Then using a knife, they cut the object in half and draw it again noticing any significant differences in the two drawings.² This helps develop visual awareness in the students. In order to develop creativity the students can create abstract designs from the original drawings. I have them do more than one in order to get as many ideas out of the students as possible. They do not become bored if they are using their own ideas and are encouraged to do so.

Form in Art - Harmony, Variety, and Balance

These three elements are the organization of a work of art and the students should have an understanding of

2. Collier, Graham, Form, Space, and Vision (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963) pp. 240-246

how they work together in a work of art. The use of slides of reproductions to demonstrate these elements aids the students understanding of them. I try to simplify the unit on organization so that beginning students will understand it without becoming confused in terms. For that reason, I stress these three elements and do not have them memorize terms such as; movement, rhythm, repetition, and dominance. The students that have a good understanding of harmony, variety, and balance are usually able to organize their ideas very well and the other elements will usually follow.

Elements of Art Structure

The elements of art structure; line, shape, value, texture, and color should be explored, but I try not to isolate one from the other because they all work together in art. The following pages explain how I try to teach awareness of these elements along with the drawing unit.

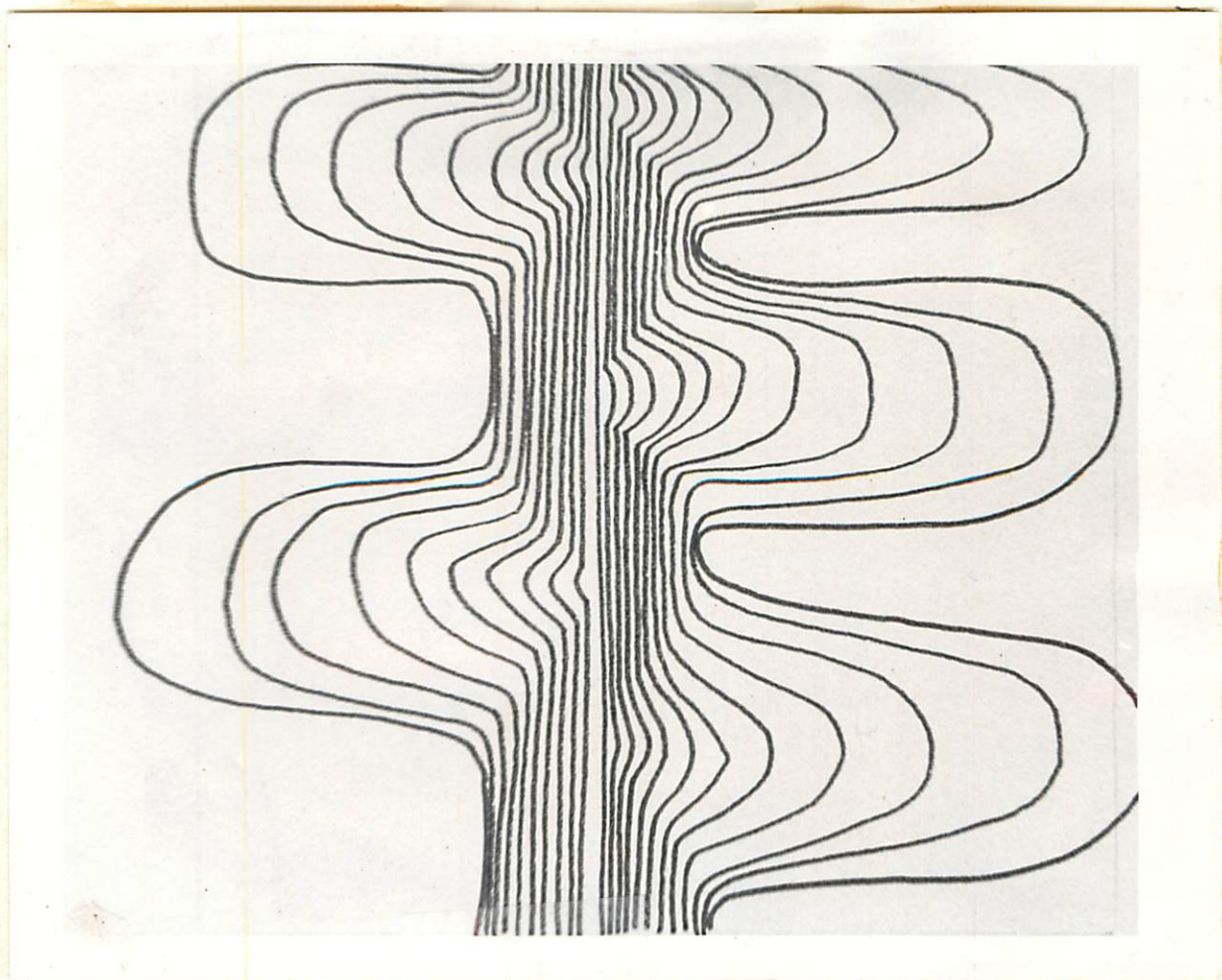
Students should explore the nature of line with different media. This gives them an awareness of different drawing tools. After the students have explored different

types of lines using different types of pens and drawing tools (sticks, soda straws, felt marking pens, etc.), they are better equipped to express themselves in a creative manner.

Pen and ink drawing is one excellent medium for the exploration of design with emphasis on line. When I begin my unit on pen and ink drawing I let the students explore the medium for several days. I set up exercises that allow them to be creative in their work. One thing to watch for is that the results of the problems differ among the students or the problem is not developing creative thinking. If the results become stereotyped I change the problem so I will begin to see new solutions.

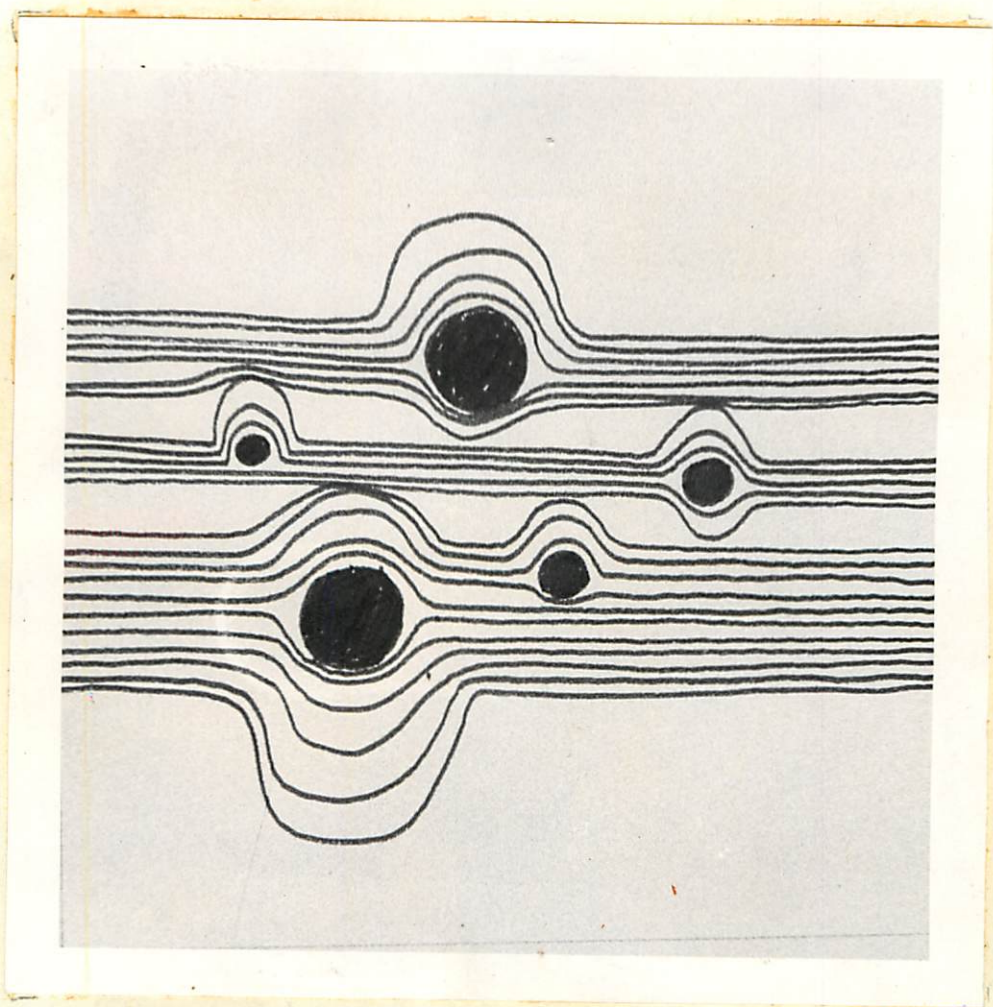
I begin with a few exercises that I found in Creative Drawing by Ernst Rottger and Dieter Klante. These are controlled exercises enabling the students to discover some of the qualities line can possess. The book has many exercises and many of them are applicable to secondary art. The following examples are of the exercises my students did this year. I may change or vary which exercises I use from year to year depending on my evaluation of the students needs. Time prevents me from using everyone.

1. Using a felt marking pen with a fine tip the student drew a straight line down the center of the paper and added a line on each side that was made to bulge in several places. More lines were added on either side with the bulges in the same places, but each time increasing. This can be also be done with pen and ink, brush, or pencil.³



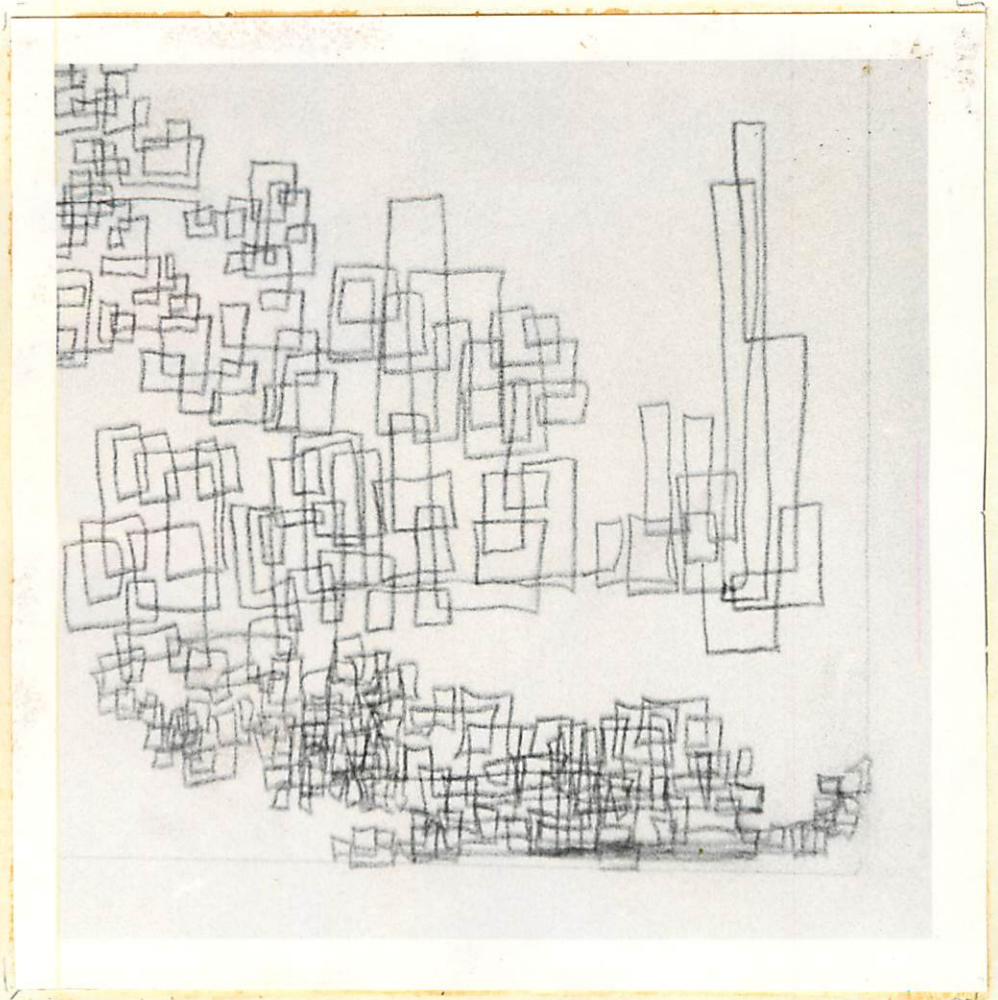
3. Rottger, Ernst and Klante, Dieter, Creative Drawing, Point and Line, (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1964) p. 38

2. Lines, circles, squares, dots, or other simple shapes were placed on the paper in balance with each other. Parallel lines running from left to right are then made to follow gently around these points without touching them. Students will become aware of tensions created by lines.⁴



4. Rottger, op. cit., pp. 39-41

3. Using felt marking pen with a fine tip one line is drawn on the paper turning at right angles and crossing itself many times. This exercise also helps a student understand shape, value, and texture.⁵



5. Rottger, op. cit., pp. 63-65

I also have the students do some contour drawing. This activity is excellent in developing visual awareness because it requires that the student examine very closely every contour of the object drawn. Later I add color to this activity with almost any medium. In fact, this type of drawing can be done with almost any type of drawing tool. This is an excellent way to teach visual awareness; it is not intended to be a drill for teaching them to be artists.

There are many other exercises that can be used other than these exercises. I don't always use the same exercises. All exercises used should allow the student to develop an awareness of line quality by his own creative use of this element of art structure.

The next three elements of art structure, shape, value and texture, I teach together. Some books take each of these elements separately, but I feel that they can best be taught in relation to each other. Again, it is important to let the students explore these elements with freedom to be creative and become aware of the possibilities of their use. After the experiments are completed, it is good to let the students see each others work because then they will become aware of possibilities

they did not think of themselves.

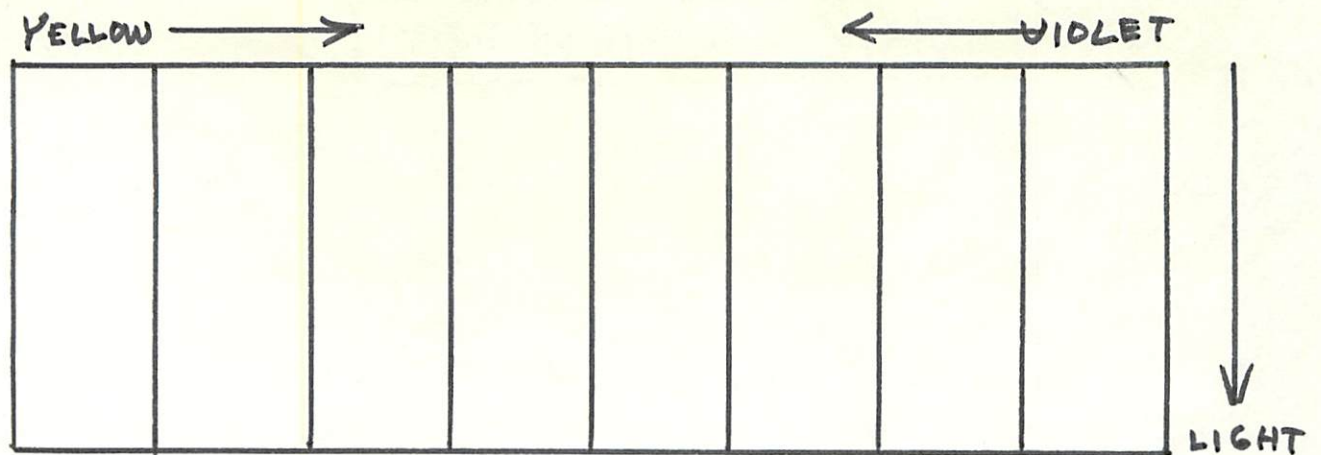
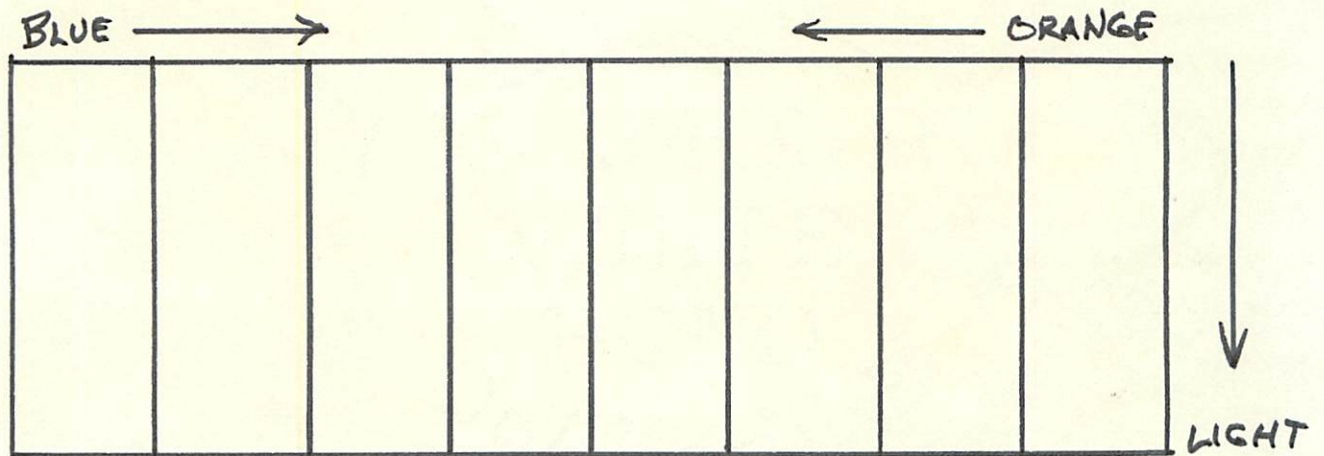
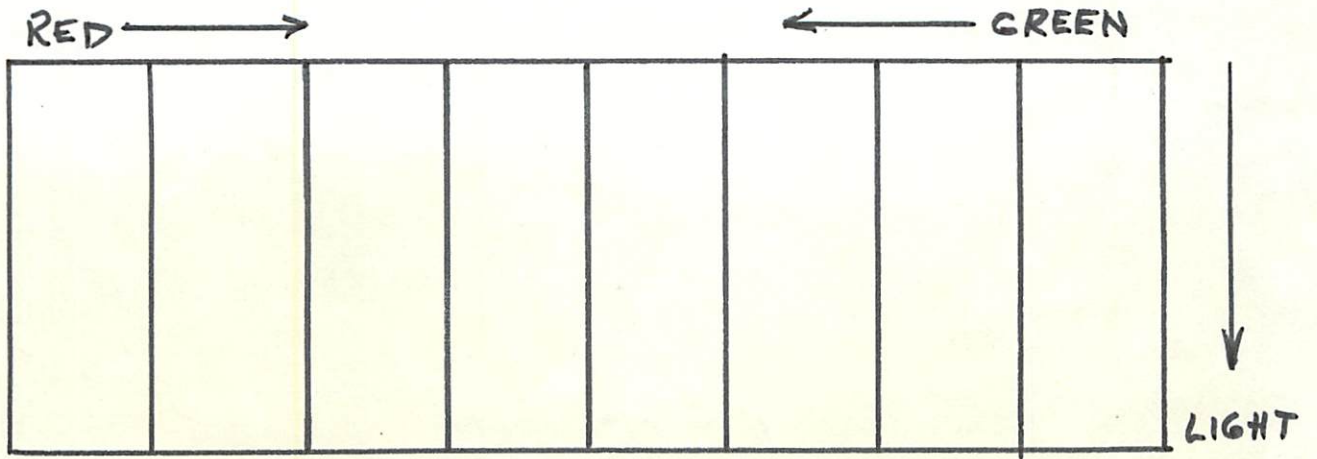
I use exercises found in books on design such as: Form, Space, and Vision by Graham Collier and Art Fundamentals by Ocvirk, Bone, Stinson, and Wigg. I spend as much time as is needed by a particular class to develop awareness to these three elements.

An interesting way to help students get away from trying to draw realism and details and explore shape and value is wash-off drawing. This is a type of drawing I became acquainted with in commercial art. I found that it had excellent qualities for helping the students loosen up and, in turn, see things from a more creative viewpoint. The materials needed are white tempera paint, watercolor paper and waterproof drawing ink. I have the students paint all the white areas in their drawings with white tempera on the white paper. It is impossible for them to be concerned with details when painting white on white. I don't let them sketch on the watercolor paper before drawing. After the white tempera is dry, the drawing ink is brushed over the entire paper. When the ink dries, the paper is sprayed with water, the tempera dissolves and takes away the ink on top of it, but the ink, being waterproof, does not wash off the paper. I have included an example of a student washoff

drawing. Note the lack of fine detail, but the interesting use of light and dark shapes. This type drawing makes good sketches for block printing.



Although exploration with color is important, the students should learn the color wheel. I also have one other chart on color that I have the students complete. This last exercise is not creative but it does develop an awareness of color. Mixing colors is an important tool for creativity in art. The students can then explore color combinations and the expressive quality of color in order to increase their awareness of color. The color wheel can be arranged in a creative design using the colors in order. This is one way of making the color wheel project creative for the students. My students have made the wheels in animal forms, figures, plant forms and non-objective designs. The results can be very creative. The color chart I use involves mixing of color complements and adding of white to colors to further explore the mixing of color. The following is an example of this chart.



Design In Space

This takes in 3-dimensional design which is a essential part of design in developing aesthetic awareness. Experiments I use include mobiles, stick constructions, wire sculpture, and clay modeling. Stick construction and wire sculpture give the students an awareness of the quality of line in space and qualities of each material. Clay modeling gives the students an understanding of sculptural design and the added problems of 3-dimensional design as opposed to 2-dimensional design. Mobiles introduce the students to a type of design that is always changing form. Each of these last two exercises also help give the students an awareness of how the materials can be used to their best advantage. All these projects are approached creatively.

Imaginative Design Projects

After the students have completed their beginning exercises in design they should be given the opportunity to be creative and use the knowledge of design they have acquired. I let them do a design project of their own

choosing using any materials or combination of materials they can find other than the materials they have already used. I encourage them to invent new ways to use materials not ordinarily used for art. This helps develop both creativity and awareness.

CHAPTER III

APPLIED DESIGN

This unit is important because it is necessary to develop an aesthetic awareness to ones life and environment. James A. Schinneller stated in Art-Search and Self-Discovery that: "Knowledge of art should develop an awareness and appreciation of both nature and well-designed man-made objects that range from paintings and houses, to kitchen utensils. Art should aid in developing a belief in oneself and a desire for creating a more beautiful and meaningful world in which to live."⁶

Aesthetic awareness to our environment can be taught by showing films, filmstrips, or slides to the students; emphasizing how design is present in our homes, cars, magazines, churches, schools and other common things we see and use every day. It should be pointed out that there are purposes for the better designs in our lives

⁶Schinneller, James A., Art-Search and Self-Discovery (fourth edition; Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company, 1964) p.3.

and that there are many inferior designs present. It is not enough just to tell them that certain ideas are good or were good and others are not. A good explanation of why something is good and why a certain idea was used, helps make the students aware of good design in our environment. If good explanations are not given and examples are not shown, the students will not accept my statements on design. In both my graduate and undergraduate work I broke these units down as follows: ART IN THE HOME, ART IN THE COMMUNITY, ART IN RELIGION, ART IN INDUSTRY, and ART IN COMMERCE. In research on these topics I have found that other individuals have combined some of these topics, given them different titles, and broken them down further. In fact, I feel that the teacher should cover this material in a manner which best utilizes his knowledge of the subject and materials he has available. I will explain only what I emphasize and some of the resources I use to present the units.

As I have said my units are titled the same as the ones I set up in my teacher training program. I have made changes in the content every year in an attempt to present the material in the most beneficial way to my students.

Art In The Home

This unit should emphasize the following points.

I. Good architectural design.

- A. This does not mean that a home should be expensive, but the most efficient use of materials should be utilized. An inexpensive home can be designed within a determined budget and be very attractive and functional.
- B. A home should express the time and place in which it is built. For example, an 18th century southern home should be different than a 20th century home built in the north because of climate and new developments in building materials and methods of construction.
- C. The needs of the family should be considered in home design. Homes built for middle class families of today should be different than the homes built for the European aristocrats of the past because each family had completely different needs and financial resources.

- II. The tastes of the owners should be reflected in the furnishings and landscaping.

I present this unit with the use of slides or some other visual aids. I have several copies of some good reference books in the classroom. Two books I have in my classroom are: Art-Search and Self-Discovery by Schinneller and Art Today by Faulkner, Ziegfeld, and Hill. Any reference book should be used to emphasize good aesthetic design or they will not help develop aesthetic awareness in the students.

Art in the Community

Art in the community is an important unit because more people are living in urban areas today than ever before. In my school about 50% of the students come from farms, but a large number of these students leave the farms and move to urban areas when they finish school. These students will then be called upon to vote on issues involving street planning, planning of parks and recreational areas, public transportation and many other civic improvements. In order to make the best decisions these students must be aware of the needs of a community.

The following points should help develop this awareness.

- I. Cities should be both functional and attractive.
 - A. Good planning of streets, parks, and commercial areas is important.
 - B. Use of water resources should be controlled.
 - C. Citizens should keep their homes neat and take pride in keeping the community looking neat. (This is something an aesthetically aware person will naturally do).
- II. Community art should be chosen for its aesthetic qualities.

I use visual aids that contrast thoughtless community planning with good planning. I always explain why something is aesthetically good, for the students should not be asked to accept a flat statement that something is good without explanation.

Art In Religion

Modern art and architecture are very common in today's churches. Part of being a member of a church

involves voting on the same type of decisions as you vote on in community planning in a smaller scale. The students must understand why modern churches look as they do and why churches of other ages look as they do. The emphasis in this unit should be on the following points.

- I. Churches should be an expression of the period in which they are built. (This is true of all architecture). A twentieth century church should be of a different design than a fifteenth century church. Explanation of why these churches were designed the way they were is important.
- II. Churches should express the needs of their congregations. Size and cost are important. Differences in religion will be reflected in differences in design. Modern church design should express the feeling of being a church. Modern designs are not good simply because they are modern or new.
- III. Churches should be designed to meet the needs of their geographical areas. Materials will be different because of climate.
- IV. All art work should be expressive of the religion and be contemporary with the age in which they were created.

I do not try to give the students the idea that any one style or type of material is best in all churches. I try to have examples showing a variety of styles using many different materials and from many different periods.

Art In Industry

I. I discuss design in relation to advances in technology and improved and new materials.

A good designer must be aware of technological advancement, public needs, and the materials he has to work with. These are the points I emphasize.

II. I show the relationship between twentieth century productions methods and simplicity of design.

A. Mass produced products should be of different design than handmade products. Each should take advantage of the method of production and materials used.

B. Discovery of the natural beauty of the material and how to retain that beauty is important. A good designer never destroys the natural beauty of the materials he works with.

I show examples of both good and poor industrial design and point out reasons why one is considered to be good and

the other not. I also have slides showing a variety of products to show the wide area of products covered by art in industry.

Art In Commerce

Once a product has been manufactured it must be sold. Advertising is necessary to the sale of a product and in the greatest commercial nation in history, advertising plays a very important part in our culture. Commercial art should be introduced as a means of developing awareness of our culture and not to develop commercial artists. Emphasis should be placed on -

- I. The difference in commercial art and fine art.
The purpose of commercial art is to sell a product while the purpose of fine art is self expression.
- II. The colors and design should direct the eye to the product for which the advertisement was created.
- III. Type of customer the advertisement is directed toward is important.
- IV. Design and colors should be in contrast with other products in the same area to catch the consumer's eye in point of sales design.

- V. Packages should express their contents.
- VI. Commercial architecture must be designed to enhance the products sold and to attract customers into the store.
- VII. Time and place play an important role in the design of commercial architecture. For example, an eighteenth century store in a small town should be of different design than a large department store in a large city because of the needs of each were different.
- VIII. Availability for parking and easy access to the store are essential to commercial architecture.
- IX. Shopping areas should create pleasant surroundings for the customer.

These points will help the student become aware of good commercial art and architecture and some of the factors which determine its appearance. My visual materials include both old and new commercial art and architecture.

CHAPTER IV

PHOTOGRAPHY

This is an excellent medium for developing visual awareness of ones own environment. I discovered the value of photography in relation to this area, when I was taking pictures for my own "Art in Nature" unit. While searching for suitable photographs to take, I realized that I was discovering many new and existing things within my own environment. I thought that after my training and experience in the field of art I had become more aware of environment, but when photographing nature I began to see things I had missed. I believe that drawing, slides, and photography each contribute toward awareness of one's environment. Each of these areas makes one look at his environment in a uniquely different way. For this reason, photography is a completely different approach to awareness than the others and each is a valuable part of the total art program.

I am not going to describe the technique of processing film or operating the camera in this paper. All this information can be found in books on photography.

I will try to show how to teach photography to develop awareness and creativity.

Creativity is necessary to good photography. Although it is harder for most students to think creatively through the medium of photography. This is because almost everyone owns some type of camera and takes "snapshots". This term has become synonymous with bad photography. How can a student be creative when taking a picture? Doesn't the camera just reproduce a likeness of the subject? These are typical questions raised by students when I tell them to be creative in their approach to photography. Creativity is new ways to photograph the subject. Different angles, closeups, change in focus, and lighting can produce very different photographs from the same subject. Photography can also be done in a non-objective way which I will explain later in this section.

This unit can be set up in a school that had no darkroom if it has a small store room or any room without windows. A sink is not necessary in the dark room if one is available near by. The door may need some lining in order to make it light tight. A table can be used for a workbench. On this bench can be put an enlarger and

developing trays. Although photography is a very complex medium, the average art teacher can gain a working knowledge of it through the many books available on the subject. Much can be done after a teacher has an understanding of the developing and enlarging process for black and white film. Equipping an area for some basic black and white photography work is not expensive. The necessary equipment will include such items as; an inexpensive enlarger and contact printer, three trays for processing prints, a tank for developing film, and a safe light. Expendable items such as processing chemicals, paper, and film are not expensive items for the average art budget. Naturally, a fully equipped darkroom is ideal. For the instructor who wishes to use photography as an activity, but has little or no knowledge of the subject, help is usually available from your local photography dealer, local camera clubs, and courses offered at some colleges in the evening.

When teaching this unit, technique is very important, but it is only a means to an end and not an end in itself. I give the students a good demonstration on the technique of operating the camera and the developing process. Without this knowledge they will not be able to do any

photography work, whether creative or not. Next I show examples of creative work in photography and discuss the possibilities of being creative in photography. Above all, I draw out suggestions from the class on the creative use of the medium. I stimulate questions on both the developing and taking of photographs.

Experimental photography can be done using lights to record a moving on the film. (A swinging flash light in a dark room with the shutter of the camera left open produces many interesting results.) One of my students attempted to make a line drawing on the film by drawing with the flashlight in front of a camera with its shutter open. The results were not a work of great art, but more important, the idea originated from the student and he was using creative thinking. Many more experiments can be done with camera by changing light conditions, shutter speeds and focus.

Another activity that can be carried out with the utilization of the darkroom is the making of photograms. Photograms do not require the use of camera or negatives. Objects placed above the photographic paper while it is being exposed to a light source and the developing of the paper make up the entire photogram process. This project presents an excellent opportunity for the student

to be creative and also gives him an opportunity to develop his visual and aesthetic awareness. He will develop his visual awareness because he will see new uses and ways to organize common objects. The creative organization of his print will develop his aesthetic sense. Michael F. Andrews describes the process of making photograms in his book Creative Print Making.⁷ It consists of the same developing procedure as used for regular photography. The difference lies in what is exposed on the paper.

⁷ Andrews, Michael F., Creative Printmaking (second edition; Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964) pp. 81-85

CHAPTER V

THE USE OF TESTING TO STIMULATE AWARENESS AND CREATIVITY

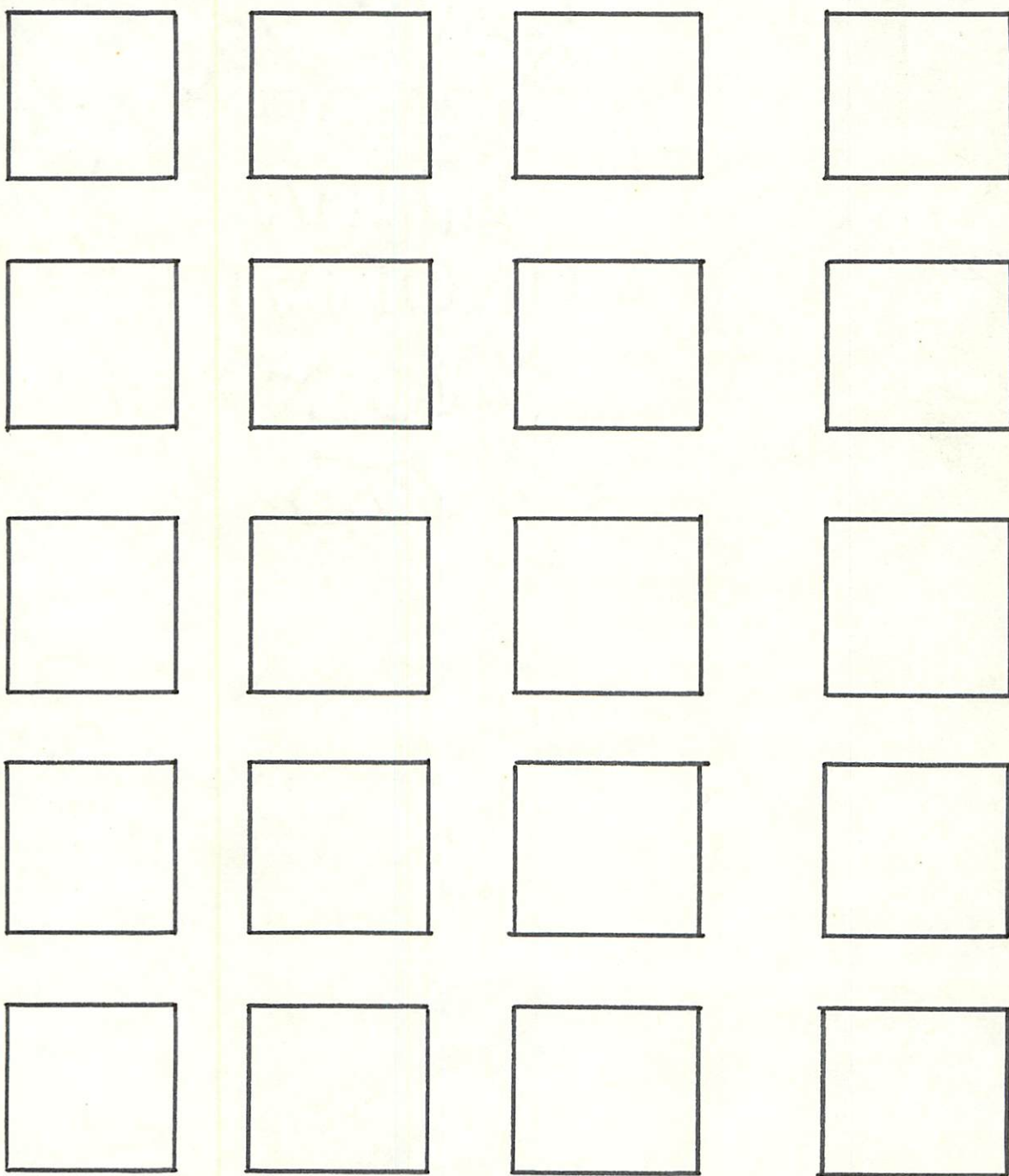
In art education we agree that developing thinking is an important part of our program. Yet, when many teachers test their students, tests requiring memory, convergent thinking, evaluation, or cognitive thinking are used more than tests requiring divergent thinking. In a sense this is not following our philosophy that we should be developing creative thinking. Why aren't tests using creative thinking used more readily? One reason is because they are difficult if not impossible to evaluate. But is it more important to grade these tests and categorize the students or give them another chance to use creative thinking. My belief is that the test can be an excellent opportunity for using divergent thinking. However, I also use tests requiring thinking other than in design and use of tools necessary to expressing oneself through art. I became aware of the possibilities of this during my Education Psychology 159 course under the instruction of E. Paul Torrance. Torrance used testing devices to make us think creatively. I realized that some of these tests could be used to

stimulate creative thinking in my art classes. I must state here that I do not evaluate my students with tests on creativity for I am only exploring this type of test and do not yet feel qualified to write or grade tests of this nature. However, I do use some of the tests as learning situations, some to develop awareness, and some to stimulate creative thinking. It is important that everything in the art class be creative and different than other classes in order to set up a creative atmosphere. Some tests can be used to stimulate creative thinking prior to beginning a new project. Some can be used to reinforce the ability to think creatively if the students are beginning to become stereotyped in their ideas. Before I start my drawing unit I like to use a test that will develop awareness. I have described this test in the section on drawing.

The following is a test I use to stimulate creativity and the production of ideas. This type of test works fine when introduced before a new project requiring new ideas. The drawings done for this problem should not be confused as being attempts at good art. This is for the production and stimulation of ideas only.

"In ten minutes see how many objects or pictures you can make from the squares below and on the next page. The squares should be the main part of whatever you make. With pencil or crayon add lines to the squares to complete your picture. You can place marks inside the squares, outside the squares, or both inside and outside the squares ---- wherever you want them, in order to make your picture. Try to think of things that no one else will think of. Make as many different pictures as you can. Make each tell a complete and as interesting a story as you can by adding in details."⁸

⁸Torrance, E. Paul, Guiding Creative Talent (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1962) pp. 219-222



This test requires that the students think of as many ideas as possible in ten minutes. The things to look for in the test are originality (number of ideas different from the other students ideas) and production (total number of ideas).

Another problem I use is to have the students complete an unfinished drawing. This I change every time I administer a test. This helps me become aware of and look for entirely new solutions. I usually have this problem in a test which requires another type of thinking other than divergent thinking. I try to have problems requiring divergent thinking in every test and try to make some test entirely composed of problems of divergent thinking.

Many ideas on this type of testing can be found in the INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL for courses in CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING produced by The Creative Education Foundation.

CHAPTER VI

PAINTING, SCULPTURE, GRAPHICS, CERAMICS, AND CRAFTS

All or some of these projects are used by almost all art teachers. These projects are necessary mainly because they add interest or variety to the curriculum. They help motivate the students because they are more "professional projects". However, a good art program may exist without some of these advanced projects. In my own situation I have not had the facilities for ceramics in the past, but will introduce this area into the curriculum this year. I haven't found myself at a loss for projects to develop creativity and awareness without ceramics, but I feel this area will add to my own curriculum. This chapter will not go into detail on each area, but will point out some things that will help develop awareness and creativity.

PAINTING

This area takes in watercolor, acrylic, oil, casein, tempera or any other type of painting. It is important

to help the student understand how to use the tools and explain the nature of the type of paint he is using. For instance, watercolor is transparent and different than the opaque quality of tempera. Oils can be painted thick and opaque or thin and transparent, with a knife or brush or any tool they choose to use. This helps develop an awareness of the medium and is necessary for the student to be creative to his fullest. I let them explore and experiment and find out what they can best do with the medium. It should be stressed that the art teacher should have no preconceived ideas of what form the students art should take. I help him search for his own ideas and reward him for originality and willingness to explore on his own and not just for the finished product. We must reward what we are teaching and that is creativity and awareness.

SCULPTURE

There are so many materials to work with in sculpture that any art program could include some type of sculpture. The students should be made aware of the differences occurring because they are now working with three-dimin-

sional design. Texture of materials, flexibility and strength of materials should play important roles in the design of the sculpture. This will develop an awareness of design in relation to material. Again, I let the students explore and create their own designs without teacher influence.

GRAPHICS

Each type of printmaking involves its own problems. These problems and techniques should be thoroughly explained to the students. If not they will have so much trouble with the medium itself they will not have time to be fully creative. When teaching techniques, I do not stress this to be more important than the creative part of printmaking. I stress creativity and exploration of the process and teach technique to be a means to this end. If the students want to explore beyond the technical rules I have explained, I let them do so. It may be a birth of a new way to print if it works and if not the student will become aware of the medium and its limitations.

One more thing that should be brought out is that different types of printmaking take on different forms.

CERAMICS AND CRAFTS

These areas will develop an awareness of applied design. Stress the valid and efficient use of the materials. That is to use the material in its most effective and efficient manner. It is important that the function of the objects made be considered when creating designs for them. Technique is important in these activities, but again only as a means to an end. Again I stress creativity of ideas and exploration of material in order to develop both creativity and awareness.

In every one of these units visual aids such as slides can be used to teach technique or awareness of the medium, I try to make the students understand that I am not giving them ideas to copy. Creativity and awareness are foremost in all my students' art projects and for this reason these areas receive greatest reward regardless of the students final results.

CONCLUSION

I have tried to show how a secondary art program should and can emphasize the development of creative thinking and aesthetic awareness in this paper. I make several changes in my program every year, experimenting and searching for better ways to reach these goals. My research has led me to one definite conclusion. That is, aesthetic awareness is best taught in the elementary schools by art educators who believe in the value of these goals. This is not a new discovery on my part, but I never realized just how important it really is to have qualified teachers in elementary art. If encouraged in an early age, we could work on trying to keep the student from losing this awareness in the secondary program instead of trying to develop it at this time. I believe more students and people would be aesthetically conscientious individuals if it were developed in the elementary school. Creativity should also be fostered in the elementary classroom and this should also be taught by an art educator or one should be present in every building to supervise all art education in the school. Creativity is becoming more popular among educators, but in many cases they are afraid to teach creative thinking be-

cause of the difficulty in evaluating this type of thinking and difficulty working with the creative ideas of a group of a large number of students at one time. Tests to determine a persons creative potential are only in an experimental stage so grouping in terms of creativity is impossible or difficult at best. In the future creativity will play an increasing role in the total education of the child and art education could become a major part of a childs education in the eyes of all who seek to better public education.

If a teacher is to develop creativity and awareness in his students, he must be a creative and aware person himself. He must allow the students to use and develop their own ideas. Skills and techniques are important in doing creative art work, but it must be emphasized that these skills are only a means to an end. The best activities to use depend on the teachers abilities and facilities. An art program does not have to include every imaginable activity in order to be effective.

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